STANDARD FORM NO. 64

CONFIDENTIAL

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

502

TO : ARA - Mr. Miller, MIL - Mr. Rubottom
Mr. Mann, Mr. Neal

DATE: December 8, 1952

FROM : MID - Mr. Clark

SUBJECT: Meeting Between the Secretary, Ambassador Toriello and Ambassador Schoenfeld

Attached for your information is a copy of the memorandum of conversation prepared by Mr. Wells covering the meeting between the Secretary, Ambassador Toriello and Ambassador Schoenfeld in New York on December 1. The memorandum is self-explanatory. While the results were, I think, somewhat disappointing, I nevertheless believe that the meeting did no harm and was worth the effort.

There is also attached a letter addressed to me by Mr. Wells dated December 3, 1952 which supplements to some extent the memorandum of conversation.

611.14/12-852

Attachments:

1. Memorandum of Conversation dated December 1, 1952.
2. Copy of letter from Mr. Wells dated December 3, 1952.

D Rusk 2/9/62

ARA:MID:EWClark:mem

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UNITED STATES DELEGATION
TO THE SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

December 1, 1952
(Typed December 2, 1952)

SUBJECT: Talk with Guatemalan Ambassador Guillermo Toriello Regarding Matters Affecting United States-Guatemalan Relations

PARTICIPANTS: The Secretary
Amb. Guillermo Toriello - Guatemalan Delegation
Amb. Rudolf E. Schoenfeld - United States Ambassador to Guatemala
Milton K. Wells - United States Delegation

Following alert[illegible] of Amb. Schoenfeld's presence in the United States, [illegible] was arranged at the Secretary's suggestion for the purpose of following up the talk of November 17, with Amb. Toriello in regard to the situation in Guatemala adversely affecting United States relations with that country. Amb. Toriello was received in the Secretary's suite at the United Nations. The conversation lasted about one and one quarter hours.

The Ambassador [illegible] part of his part of the conversation toward a [illegible] Guatemala's attitude toward Communist influences in that country. Despite frequent efforts of the Secretary and Amb. Schoenfeld to [illegible] into more specific and more constructive channels, he [illegible] to generalities. With considerable repetition, he [illegible] Government's basic policy as one conditioned by a sincere [illegible] democratic procedures and to avoid dictatorship. His [illegible] the best way to combat Communism is to improve the [illegible] and economic conditions which produce unrest among the [illegible] classes. This approach, he argued, is fraught with less [illegible] than a repressive policy which would drive Communism under-[illegible] the power and influence of the Communist leaders. [illegible] are known to the Government and that they would [illegible] should war occur. He personally shared [illegible] that they can be controlled best in the open and that in any case [illegible] themselves with the rank and file. Regarding the labor unions, he did not believe the workers shared the ideological views of their leaders and were interested only in better pay and better living [illegible].

During the course of the conversation, however, Amb. Toriello did make [illegible] of information [illegible] on several specific situations, as recorded [illegible].

Toriello

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Toriello praised the personality and qualifications of the new Foreign Minister, Dr. Raul Osegueda, whose friendly attitude and sincere desire to work for the best possible relations with the United States would facilitate his own mission. This gave him much satisfaction since he could now confidently count upon the support of his Foreign Office as well as President Arbenz to this end. Osegueda had asked the Ambassador to convey his respects and greetings to the Secretary, and to Ambassador Schoenfeld whom he looked forward to seeing in Guatemala. The Foreign Minister had expressed a desire to attend the forthcoming inaugural ceremonies if invitations are to be extended to other governments to be represented by special delegations. The Secretary stated he would inquire into our policy in this regard and advise the Ambassador as to whether we plan to invite special delegations. Both the Secretary and Ambassador Schoenfeld reciprocated the Foreign Minister's greetings.

The conversation turned to the pro-Communist slant of the official newspaper Diario de Centro America, which, as Amb. Schoenfeld commented, has an unfortunate effect upon public opinion in the United States. Toriello stated he could assure us of a future change in that journal's policy. He explained that the Diario de Centro America includes two sections, the gazette portion which prints official decrees and announcements, and the news or informative section. The problem may be solved, he said, by eliminating the informative section, converting the Diario into a truly official gazette.

Amb. Schoenfeld inquired whether any steps were contemplated to remedy a similar situation with respect to the Government broadcasting station TGW. Toriello assured him that the policy of TGW would also be changed. One explanation of the frequent attacks on the United States heard in the past over this Government station, he apologized, was that unfriendly elements abused the radio time which they had rented from TGW for unofficial programs. He described how he himself once had taken up the telephone to stop a TGW program (arranged by Gramco Posadas) slandering the Government of neighboring Honduras.

Another factor which influenced the United States press and public opinion was the possibility of pro-Communists in the Guatemalan Congress. Amb. Schoenfeld commented, noting in this connection that several known Communists are likely to be elected on the coalition ticket supporting the Government in the forthcoming Congressional elections. Amb. Schoenfeld also remarked that some of these individuals had recently visited behind the Iron Curtain. Toriello brushed aside as not really important the visits behind the Iron Curtain of such Guatemalans as Robert Alvarado Fuentes (former President of Congress), Jose Manuel Fortuny, and Victor Manuel Gutierrez. He professed not to believe that these and other Guatemalans were seriously indoctrinated by such visits, and by implication seemed to say that their Marxian ideas were geared simply to Guatemalan social and economic considerations. In any case, he did not discuss the

obvious

obvious international implication of their activities or their presence at Soviet sponsored "peace" conferences.

As to political cases, Toriello expressed the opinion that Carlos Manuel Pellecer would be elected, not because he is a Communist but because he gained a reputation in 1944 as a friend of labor. He predicted that Fortuny might be defeated; not because the Government opposed him, but for the same reasons that Eumberto Gonzalez Suarez failed to become Mayor of Guatemala City--that is, because the relatively intelligent electorate in the city and the influence of the Church brought about his defeat at the polls.

Once or twice during the conversation, Toriello urged us not to be taken in by the denunciations of the Government by the opposition. By inference, he seemed to allege that our estimate of the situation had been unduly influenced by wild stories and rumors circulated by the subversive opposition, disguised and cloaked by anti-communism. The anti-communist movement in Guatemala is dangerous, he argued, since it does conveniently serve as a cloak for the irreconcilable opposition. Alluding again to the alleged "grand conspiracy against Guatemala" with which Guatemalan spokesmen so frequently charge the United States press and "foreign interests" Toriello said the situation was aggravated by the fact that Guatemala does not have diplomatic relations with Franco Spain, Peru, Venezuela and others. These countries, he said, add their bit to the campaign against Guatemala. In this connection, he commented that he hoped that Guatemala would establish normal relations with Venezuela before the Tenth Conference of Inter-American States meets in Caracas.

Mr. Toriello did not bring up the question of the proposed Inter-American Highway Agreement.

RWells:jls

cc: US Mission
Mr. Dreier
Mr. Taylor
Mrs. Wells (2)
Reference
CAF

Department of State
WRA (6 copies)
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as determined by S/S

591

503

December 3, 1952

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Dear Bill:

This morning, upon reading the memorandum of conversation covering Amb. Toriello's talk with the Secretary and Amb. Schoenfeld, I note a number of omissions which may or may not affect the value of the document. I give them to you for what they are worth.

As regards the labor unions, Amb. Toriello, in effect, admitted in response to queries put to him by Amb. Schoenfeld that the CTG is Communist controlled. It was also pointed out that the recent labor trouble affecting Pan American Airways was agitated by Natsul Aguirre who at least sold himself out to be a Communist. In this connection, the talk also touched upon the action of the Guatemalan labor court in issuing an injunction against the departure from Guatemala of Pan American officials. Amb. Toriello recounted his part in helping remove the injunction but said that this court procedure is a normal one.

My memorandum also should have noted in the first paragraph of page two that Amb. Toriello indicated he would resign if he saw that he could not succeed in his mission of bringing about the most friendly relations between our two countries. In response to that comment, Amb. Schoenfeld subtly got across the idea that he should not be impatient; that favorable reaction in the United States depends upon favorable developments in Guatemala. He also commented along the lines that the State Department is not a free agent which can operate in disregard of the United States press and public opinion.

With regard to the observation recorded in the last paragraph of page two of the memorandum, Amb. Toriello said he knows from an experience which he had had, long ago, and several years with Portuny that the latter [illegible] is not really dangerous. On the other hand, he said

[illegible],
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MKWells:jts

said that Gutierrez was held in wide respect as an honest, sincere man, devoted to what he considers to be a just cause. For this reason, Gutierrez commands more respect and is therefore more dangerous.

Amb. Portella also said that he personally is working toward establishing normal diplomatic relations with Venezuela.

Sincerely yours,

Milton K. Wells

Enclosure:

Copy of letter for Amb. Schoenfeld.